

## BUILDERS EXTEND PRESENT PAY SCALE

Untermeyer Compromise for  
Efficiency Basis of Wages  
Under Scrutiny.

## STRIKE IS AVERTED

Arrangement Reached to  
Continue Schedules Un-  
til January 31.

## ARBITRATION REJECTED

Real Estate Board Says Hous-  
ing Emergency Has  
Passed.

The board of governors of the Building Trades Employers Association, while not accepting in its entirety Samuel Untermeyer's compromise plan for a two year agreement with the Building Trades Council by which the efficiency of labor should determine whether existing wage scales continue throughout 1922, voted yesterday to extend the existing agreement at least till January 31 next. The prospect of an immediate strike in the building trades when the present agreement expires next Saturday therefore is averted.

Mr. Untermeyer's plan encountered two big obstacles when it came up for consideration at yesterday's meeting of the employers at 30 West Thirty-third street. The board of governors did not, in the first place, feel justified in binding the constituent associations to Mr. Untermeyer's idea of labor's efficiency determining its reward. The idea was not rejected. It was referred to each association and a report called for within a week.

## Wages for Unskilled Labor.

The second rock on which the negotiations temporarily foundered was a well defined reluctance on the part of the employers to agree to a continuance of the existing wage scales in the case of common laborers and helpers. It was pointed out by Christian G. Norman, chairman of the board, that the advance in pay for this class of labor since the war had averaged about 130 per cent., while for skilled labor the average advance had been about 62 per cent. A majority of the board felt that while a continuance of present rates for bricklayers, masons, plasterers, carpenters and other skilled workers might be justified, particularly if greater efficiency were to result, the time had come when unskilled labor should receive a slight reduction.

## For an Arbitration Board.

In a letter to the Building Trades Council Mr. Norman, on behalf of the employers, said he regretted that the council had not seen fit to accept the employers' suggestion for an arbitration board of five members, one to be selected by the president of the American Federation of Labor and one each by the Governor of the State of New York, the Merchants Association, the American Institute of Architects and the president of the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York. He urged the council to reconsider this suggestion. Mr. Crowley said last night, however, that this would never be acceptable to the labor unions for the reason that they felt it would mean labor's representation on such a board would be only in the ratio of one to four.

## Views of Real Estate Board.

Mr. Untermeyer made public a letter received by the Lockwood committee from the Real Estate Board of New York urging that before the committee makes a report to the Legislature on the renewal of the emergency rent laws, it fortify itself with data from responsible sources. It is the contention of the Real Estate Board, as outlined in its letter, that the housing emergency has passed. Mr. Untermeyer replied that the committee held a contrary belief and suggested that the board supply him with such evidence in its possession as will support its contention. After pointing out that the emergency housing and rent laws "involve the widest departure from previously accepted economic doctrine," the Real Estate Board, through its president, Charles G. Edwards, says: "We do not think it proper that you should go before the Legislature with a report urging the renewal of the so-called landlord and tenant legislation unless as a part of your report, you are in a position to furnish the exact facts with reference to housing conditions as they now exist; such facts having been ascertained, not from loose and general statements made to you from prejudiced sources but by a carefully planned and carefully executed investigation. If you wish our assistance in this matter we shall be glad to cooperate."

## Mr. Untermeyer's Reply.

To this communication Mr. Untermeyer replied: "There can be no doubt of the importance of the question presented by you, nor of your right to be heard. Our survey of the situation has led us to the conclusion that the emergency, which gave rise to the legislation to which you refer has not only not yet passed but is as acute as at the time the legislation was enacted, so far as concerns the problem of housing the masses.

tells me that the peril to health in that situation is as great to-day as it ever was.

"The fact that the emergency has not yet passed is further evidenced by the ever accumulating number of cases in the Municipal Courts in which these laws are being successfully invoked against the overreaching demands of grasping landlords.

"Our committee resumes its public hearings on Thursday of next week, the 5th of January, at 10:30, in the City Hall. I suggest that you prepare and send me such data as in your judgment will support the contentions of your board, together with a list of the witnesses whom you desire to have the committee call on this subject, and that they be in attendance at the opening of the sessions to present their point of view."

## 30 DAY REST IN JAIL RELISHED BY HYLAN

Mayor Has No Fear of Prosecution for Contempt.

Joking about the threat of the Real Estate Owners Association to have him punished for contempt along with other members of the Board of Estimate for not putting back some \$2,000,000 of pension money in the budget, Mayor Hyland at a meeting of the Board of Estimate yesterday said:

"I wouldn't mind thirty days in jail. I need a rest."

Later at the meeting of the board when Stewart Browne of the Owners Association started to argue about the pension money, the Mayor ordered him to his seat and directed a policeman to help him find it.

Duncan MacInnes, chief accountant of the Finance Department, had been asked by Henry Smith, Acting Comptroller, to explain how easy it would be to provide money enough to meet the \$2,000,000 ordered into the budget by the Appellate Division, that was sustained by the Court of Appeals.

The city had received a premium of nearly \$2,000,000 on its recent bond sale. This would be transferred to the rapid transit sinking fund, releasing some \$1,300,000 already in the budget for that purpose. There were other sinking fund moneys that could be used to make up the total.

In reply to a question Mr. MacInnes said there was more than \$4,000,000 surplus in the sinking funds.

"When the lemon will not be squeezed dry?" chuckled the Mayor.

"No, indeed; there will be plenty of juice left," said MacInnes.

Mr. Browne bobbed up at this point to combat the statement of the accountant. He was promptly heckled.

"Are you a citizen?" asked the Acting Comptroller.

"I swore allegiance to the United States thirty-five years ago," was the reply. "Long before a majority of the people in this room."

"There goes Browne after another injunction," remarked the Mayor, who had bolted out of the room after being ordered to take a seat.

## WILGUS DEFENDS NARROWS TUNNEL

He Tells Engineers Scheme Is Not Interstate.

Declaring the newspapers have not shown a spirit of fair play toward the Board of Estimate's plan for a freight and passenger tunnel under the Narrows connecting belt railroad lines, in that they had published "one sided propaganda of non-engineers in favor of the bi-State port tunnel plan," Col. William J. Wilgus, consulting engineer of the board's tunnel engineering staff, outlined the board's case last night before the municipal engineers.

He answered the argument that the proposed city tunnels would not be adequate to carry both trunk line and rapid transit traffic by pointing out that the city proposes to build rapid transit tunnels alongside the railroad tunnels. Col. Wilgus quoted the act of the Legislature authorizing construction of the tunnel, showing its purpose was "to develop the port," in answer to the criticism that the plan is too local in its application.

He would not accept the criticism that the matter is primarily interstate. He said negotiations have been conducted by the city only with the railroad which might patronize the proposed tunnel, and that those negotiations were to show the roads how their congestion could be relieved and to invite them to participate in the plan.

Col. Wilgus said the argument that execution of the Board of Estimate plan would necessitate the construction of expensive break-up yards at points of diversion from trunk lines was without foundation. He named many points of diversion on trunk lines where, he said, trains are diverted without the necessity of reclassification, and the same thing could be done with the proposed city arrangement, he added.

"The question, however," he said, "is not whether the Narrows tunnel suits everybody. The Legislature already has stipulated the tunnel be built under the Narrows. It is a question of whether there is to be another tunnel in addition."

## WILL BRING CHARGES AGAINST ROBISON

H. G. Knowles to Complain of Rear Admiral.

Horace G. Knowles of Wilmington, Del., formerly United States Consul in Santo Domingo, who represented various political and civic organizations of the island Republic during the recent Senatorial investigation of the United States military government there, announced to New York yesterday and announced his intention of going to Washington for two purposes:

To lodge formal charges of conduct unbecoming an officer against Rear Admiral Samuel S. Robison, Military Governor, for alleged insults when undertaking to communicate with Senator McCorrick, chairman of the Senatorial committee.

To demand of Senator McCorrick's committee the further hearing of Santo Domingo witnesses in person, either in Santo Domingo or by bringing them to the United States, instead of receiving affidavits. Mr. Knowles alleged that the committee left three days after the testimony of the witnesses, and called for; that all the evidence has been presented, and that, therefore, the recent preliminary report of the committee is in the nature of a decision in the middle of a case.

Mr. Knowles said his grievance against Admiral Robison was that when he undertook to send a message by the committee's secretary to Senator McCorrick, already aboard ship to return to the United States, Admiral Robison ordered him off the pier and indicated he would have him arrested if he refused.

## SUBWAY GUARD IS KILLED.

The body of a man identified as M. J. O'Brien, 45, a subway guard, of 448 West 163d street, was found yesterday near the 191st street station of the West Side subway by the motorman of a southbound train. It was reported that O'Brien fell from the rear of the train to which he was attached while adjusting rear lights and was probably stunned and then killed by the next train.

## PHONE RATE INQUIRY HINT BY UNTERMEYER

He Asks P. S. C. What It Proposes to Do to Lower 'Excessive' Tariffs.

In a letter to the Public Service Commission, made public yesterday, Samuel Untermeyer, counsel to the Lockwood legislative committee on housing, again suggests the installation of slot machines "in every home where they can be advantageously used" as a move to reduce cost of telephone service. Mr. Untermeyer asks the commission what it is doing or proposes to do in regard to an investigation of the company's rates, particularly suburban tolls. His letter suggests the possibility of an investigation of the company's tariff rates unless the commission is prepared to act. The letter follows:

"The telephone service has become a substantial item in the cost of living. It has grown more and more costly and inefficient. As counsel for the joint legislative committee on housing I had intended to investigate the subject with a view of recommendations looking to the improvement of the service, the reduction of costs and, more particularly, to insist upon the installation of a system that would give to the users the means of checking up the charges for service made against them, which they now have no way of verifying.

"Having regard to the density of the traffic, there is no city in the world in which the charges are so high, with due allowance for the increased conveniences and expense of service on this account. It is hardly necessary to remind you of the quality of the service. An apartment house is not to-day livable until a telephone is installed, and yet it still takes months to secure one. But that is not the main purpose of this communication.

"Why is the company not compelled to install slot machines in every home where they can be advantageously used? It is not every household that has a slot machine, and that with a slot machine installation public opinion would not support a rental charge such as the company is now permitted to exact from every household.

"I have long suspected that the reason the slot machines are not installed is that they would reduce the company's revenues from the endless mistakes of their operators in calling and charging for the wrong numbers and where there was no service and that with a slot machine installation public opinion would not support a rental charge such as the company is now permitted to exact from every household.

"The rates for suburban calls seem to me also exorbitant, especially where the stations are a part of the city system and are owned or controlled by the City Telephone Company. If there is any justification for these tolls to suburban points within a radius of less than five miles from the city limits I would like to know what it is.

"Our committee is reluctant, for the reason above stated, to take up this question and is hoping that relief will shortly come from your commission. If not inconsistent with the plans and purposes of your commission and pending investigation or otherwise I shall be pleased to have your views on this subject and your ideas of what you expect to accomplish in the direction indicated as a guide to the future action of the committee."

## FIREFIGHTERS SUCCUMB TO CELLULOID FUMES

Clerks Found Unconscious in Novelty Shop Blaze.

Celluloid fumes from a fire in the novelty shop of I. Tannenblatt, on the third floor of the nine story office building at 32 Union Square East, last night overcame three volunteer firemen, clerks in an adjoining office. They were found semi-conscious by firemen and were sent to Bellevue Hospital, where they were revived.

They gave their names as Julius Kaufman, 22 Mangan street; Arthur Morse, 1276 Grant avenue, Bronx; and Daniel Koppell, 150 Glenmore avenue, Brooklyn. The damage was about \$2,000.

Fire in a tenement at 176 Eldridge street yesterday drove twenty-four families into the street and threatened for a time to spread to the adjoining building. After a hard fight the firemen confined the flames to the first and second floors and carried out about a dozen tenants who had been trapped. Hundreds of persons gathered in the street and cheered the rescuers.

## NOT FREE YET, DEBS TELLS HOME FOLK

Must First Liberate All His  
Fellow Men From Prison  
Bondage.

TERRE HAUTE, Dec. 28.—Welcomed by the cheers of thousands of followers, friends and neighbors, Eugene V. Debs returned to-night to his home here after an absence of almost three years spent in Federal prison for his antiwar speech in 1918 when America was at war, and responded to the greeting with a speech from the front porch of his home, pleading again he would not rest until others now serving prison terms are free.

"I have a heart for my fellow prisoners left behind me at Atlanta," said Debs, "and I shall not rest in peace until they are restored to their loved ones."

Mrs. Debs was not at the railroad station to meet her husband, for she preferred their reunion to be in their home. Debs was delayed in reaching here by a two day visit to Washington and an afternoon stop to-day in Indianapolis.

The delay apparently did not lessen the ardor of his home town greeting, for a long line of marchers escorted him from the station to his home and then wended its way into the downtown district to continue the jubilation.

Greeted by 15,000.

Leaders in charge of the demonstration variously estimated the participants in the jubilation to number from 10,000 to 15,000. Hundreds of spectators walled the line of march of the parade.

The parade moved directly from the railroad station to Debs' home, only a short distance, with the Socialist leader riding bareheaded on a motor truck. When the truck drew up in front of the home Mrs. Debs appeared on the porch but she soon retreated to the interior as the swarming crowd separated her from her husband. Finally when he had jammed his way to the porch she rushed out to embrace him. Then he turned to the welcoming throng to thank it for the demonstration.

"Home again," began Debs in a voice shaking with emotion. First he thanked the crowd, saying its demonstration was a "wonderful, beautiful homecoming."

Not Free Yet, He Says.

"I felt in leaving here," said the aged leader, "that you were with me in spirit, and I was sustained by your faithfulness and devotion. I thank every one of you for the efforts you have been putting forth so long in my behalf. You have succeeded at last. But I am not free so long as any are in prison. I have a heart for my fellow men, and I hope to devote my life to the liberation of those who are imprisoned and I shall know no rest until they are restored to their loved ones."

"In my heart there is no bitterness, only a resolution not to give up, but to remain true to my honest convictions and to my ideals. I could not do otherwise. I can't make a speech now, but I can say that I love you all for this demonstration."

## SOLDIER PRISONERS MAY GET U. S. CASH

Compensations Sought Also for Men in Asylums.

Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

Washington, D. C., Dec. 28.—Financial assistance ranging up to \$157 a month a man may be made available to ex-service men serving prison terms as a result of activities of the Veterans' Bureau. The bureau is conducting a nationwide campaign to list ex-service men who have received prison terms or been committed to asylums for the insane.

Working under the supervision of Col. Charles R. Forbes, head of the Veterans' Bureau, C. W. Swann is making a canvass of all correctional institutions of the United States for ex-service men who may need assistance and are entitled to it under the laws through which the Veterans' Bureau operates.

In one New York State institution for the insane the bureau discovered forty ex-service men, among whom were several who won decorations during the war. Some are suffering from tuberculosis and other diseases contracted as a result of and during their service, and are entitled to compensation for disability, which will be paid to them or their dependents.

The Veterans' Bureau, Mr. Swann explained, does not intend to do anything to interfere with the prison sentences given to these men.

## MACARTHUR ALIBI IMPRESSES MILLER

Delays Decision in Extradition  
Hearing of Artist Accused  
by Two Women.

Special Dispatch to THE NEW YORK HERALD.

New York Herald Bureau.

Whether Alexander A. MacArthur, the young New York artist, is a victim of mistaken identity is a question that was put up to Gov. Miller to-day at the hearing on the application of the New Jersey authorities for his extradition.

MacArthur is under indictment in Essex county, New Jersey, on the charge of attacking two women near Montclair. Before Gov. Miller at the Executive Mansion, where the hearing was held, the women confronted MacArthur and positively identified him as their assailant. One of them, Mary Louise Bradshaw, said he attacked her on the morning of September 17, and the other, Mrs. Helen D. O'Neill, said she was attacked on the morning of October 19. Both crimes were committed under similar circumstances on a short cut path, leading from Montclair to Upper Montclair.

Attorney Emil Fuchs, attorney for MacArthur, presented six witnesses to prove that MacArthur was not in New Jersey on the date of either assault. Five of them, including Miss Woodford, daughter of Gen. Stewart L. Woodford, testified that on September 17, he was at the home of his mother at Vineyard Haven, Mass.; that he had been there continuously for several weeks and remained there until September 24. They told of beach parties and other social events he attended on September 17, and both before and after that date, on the night of which, they testified, he was at a musical entertainment given by his mother at her bungalow.

The witnesses besides Miss Woodford included Mrs. J. A. Hoffman, Mrs. Clarence H. Abbott, Mrs. Harry L. Babmes, all of Montclair, and Mr. McCarty of New York. Charlotte Love, maid of Mrs. MacArthur, testified that on October 19 the young artist was at the MacArthur home in New York.

Gov. Miller said that while he did not doubt the veracity of either woman he was not impressed with their identification of MacArthur. He said that in the light of the testimony of the witnesses brought by Mr. MacArthur's attorney that of Miss Bradshaw was of no value whatever.

"The ability of a person to identify another," he said, "is of so dubious a character that without some better reason than has been given here I should attach practically no importance to the testimony. I am frank to say. It is so easy to make mistakes. There is the single circumstance here, or coincidence, that both of these women identified MacArthur at the police station. That is the only circumstance that, to my mind is entitled to the slightest consideration."

Mr. Fuchs said he expected that eventually MacArthur would have to go to trial on the two indictments, but he wanted it put off until the strong feeling in New Jersey over this case had died down. He also asked that the decision be held up until after MacArthur's father, John R. MacArthur, had returned from Rome next month.

The Governor said he wished time to study the case before making a decision.

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